



City of Columbus
Mayor Michael B. Coleman

Department of Development

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Building Services Division

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Construction Industry Communication # 30

From: Keith Wagenknecht, Chief Building Official

Re: Window Wells

Requirements: Section 310.2 of the Residential Code of Ohio provides the minimum requirements for the installation of a window well for emergency escape and rescue. Section 310.4 permits the well to be covered if the cover can be removed from the inside without the use of a key, tool or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening. The code does not indicate when a cover is required over the well except that section 312.1 requires guards to be provided near the open sides of elevated walking surfaces that minimize the possibility of a fall from the walking surface to the lower level.

Memorandum: To minimize a fall into window wells, all wells must have a cover meeting section 312.1 unless the well is protected by landscaping located a minimum of 36 inches away from the nearest open side of the well.